

27—10.60 (161A) Funding rates. The purpose of this division is to establish the funding rates at which the state will fund or share the cost for approved soil conservation practices under the various incentive programs. In all cases, except for the mandatory program, the state's share will be computed using the percentages specified below and the estimated cost, the amended estimated cost, or the actual cost of implementing the practice, whichever is less. Payments under the mandatory program will be based on actual costs. Funds distributed to annual programs for permanent practices may be used in combination with other public funds as long as the maximum cost-share rate realized by the district cooperator does not exceed 75 percent of the total eligible costs.

10.60(1) Voluntary.

a. The state will cost-share 50 percent of the cost certified by the certifying technician as being reasonable, proper, and incurred by the applicant in voluntarily installing approved, permanent soil conservation practices, except for tree planting. Eligible costs include machine hire or use of the applicant's equipment, needed materials delivered to and used at the site, and labor required to install the practice.

b. For tree and shrub establishment, the following criteria shall apply:

(1) Fifty percent of the actual cost, not to exceed \$450 per acre, including the following:

1. Establishing ground cover;
2. Trees and tree planting operations;
3. Weed and pest control; and
4. Mowing, disking, and spraying.

(2) Fifty percent of actual cost, not to exceed \$150 per acre, for wood plant control.

(3) Actual cost, not to exceed the lesser of \$14 per rod or \$45 per acre protected, for permanent fences that protect planted acres from grazing, excluding boundary and road fencing.

c. For currently funded fiscal years, the division will make one-time payments of up to \$10 per acre for no-tillage, ridge-till and strip-till; \$6 per acre for contour farming; \$25 per acre for establishing a cover crop; and 50 percent of the cost up to \$25 per acre for strip-cropping, field borders and filter strips. Not more than 30 percent of the district's original allocation and supplemental allocation may be used for the establishment of management practices to control soil erosion on land that is now row-cropped.

d. Funding for the restoration of permanent practices damaged or destroyed because of a disaster (see 10.41(1)) does not have to be allocated on a cost-share basis.

e. Where a livestock watering system is installed in a grade stabilization structure, cost share is limited to 50 percent of the estimated or eligible cost, whichever is less, not to exceed \$500 for the watering tank or holding facility, pipe and valves. Payment will be made only if the structure is fenced.

10.60(2) Summer construction incentives. In addition to cost share for the establishment of a permanent conservation practice, up to \$200 per acre is available to offset income lost from cropland acres taken out of production during the growing season. Payment will be made upon completion of the permanent conservation practice. To qualify:

a. The field being treated shall be in row cropland during the growing season in which the permanent conservation practice is being constructed.

b. The construction area shall be planted with a conservation cover for erosion control purposes on the construction site.

c. The construction of the permanent conservation practice shall take place between June 15 and October 15. Work must be started and completed between these dates and verified by the technician prior to payment of the incentive.

d. Only the land necessary for the construction is eligible for this incentive. The construction work area shall be determined by the technician.

e. The construction work area shall not be used to grow a row crop except for the required conservation cover crop.

10.60(3) *Special watershed projects.* Commissioners may enter into agreements providing for cost sharing up to 60 percent of the cost of a project that includes five or more contiguous farm units which collectively have at least 500 or more acres of farmland and which constitute at least 75 percent of the agricultural land lying within a watershed or a subwatershed. The owners must jointly agree to a watershed conservation plan in conjunction with their respective farm unit soil conservation plans.

10.60(4) *Mandatory.* The rate of cost share for permanent soil and water conservation practices required as a result of an administrative order shall be 50 percent of the total cost to the landowner of installing the approved practice. The cost must be certified by the technician as being reasonable, proper and incurred by the landowner. The rate of cost share for temporary soil and water conservation practices is set by the state soil conservation committee.

10.60(5) *Watersheds above publicly owned lakes.* The state will cost-share 75 percent of the approved cost of permanent soil and water conservation practices on watersheds above certain publicly owned lakes. Watersheds above publicly owned lakes that qualify for 75 percent cost sharing must be identified on a priority list established by the department of natural resources.

10.60(6) *Conservation cover.* Cost share for certain lands is restricted by Iowa Code chapter 161A. Each tract of agricultural land which has not been plowed or used for growing row crops at any time within the prior 15 years shall be considered classified as agricultural land under conservation cover. "Agricultural land" has the meaning assigned that term by Iowa Code section 9H.1. If any tract of land so classified is thereafter plowed or used for growing row crops, the district commissioners shall not approve use of state cost-share funds for establishing permanent or temporary soil and water conservation practices on that tract of land in an amount greater than one-half the amount of cost-share funds which would be available for that land if it were not classified as agricultural land under conservation cover. This restriction shall apply even if an administrative order or court order has been issued requiring establishment of conservation practice.

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